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Working immigrants aren't a drag on economy

By Maria Nimia Amaya

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It's time to put a stop to racism!

As an immigrant, I believe we are an essential part of the United States.

It is sad to read letters with no respect toward us and little knowledge about our countries, especially when the letters come from older "educated" people. The United States is a country based on immigrants and we can't deny that fact.

Working immigrants do not slice the economic pie against Americans. Quite the contrary, Americans obtain bigger helpings of the pie when immigrants work. Only welfare state handouts enable immigrants to slice the pie against Americans. Prior to the welfare state, immigrants had to work to survive. U.S. history is replete with examples demonstrating that working immigrants benefited not only themselves, but also the Americans who employed them, as well as the Americans who purchased what immigrants produced.

The most politically powerful argument against admitting immigrants has been that they take jobs held by natives and thereby increase native unemployment. Immigration may not be a danger to the economy because even in the few sectors where immigrants concentrate, such as the restaurant and hotel industries, there tends not to be a harmful effect on native employment because natives do not want these jobs. It seems fair to conclude that while in theory immigration should produce some unemployment in the short run, the amount is in fact negligible. There may not even be a theoretical reason to believe that immigration causes unemployment.

At the same time, immigrants increase demand for labor across the range of occupations because immigrants consume goods as well as produce them. This point is crucial, but too little understood. Immigrants not only take jobs; they make jobs. Immigrants create new jobs indirectly with their spending; and they also create new jobs directly with new businesses.

Immigrants tend to bring an unusually high degree of skill, education, self-reliance, and innovative flair. These are less tangible benefits, but not less important, because they raise productivity and stimulate economic vitality. The widely held belief that immigrants arrive with little or no education, few marketable skills, and in a generally tired and depressed condition is one of the most powerful, least accurate, and most persevering myths about immigration. On balance, immigrants are not a drag on the economy. As workers, consumers, entrepreneurs, and taxpayers, they invigorate it and contribute

healthy economic benefits.

Finally, I have something to say to anyone who may disagree with me and still continue to try to stop the "invasion"; immigrants are here to stay!

Maria Nimia Amaya lives in Rule and is a college student.

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